



# Callystown News

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## Thankfully Back Again !



Delighted pupils returned to school over the last couple of weeks. Two months of being away from the classroom has been tough on pupils and staff alike. Our remote learning programme proved to be very successful and it was a testament to everyone's hard work and dedication. Pupils' posts on Seesaw were in excess of 30,000 and the quality of work was of a very high standard. However, it is very difficult to replace the classroom experience and it is great to hear the corridors of the school buzzing with the sound of learning. Thankfully, the routines and precautions to reduce the spread of Covid 19 that were put in place at the beginning of the school year have become second nature to our pupils. It is extremely important that we all make our best effort to keep the virus from coming into our school and that we can look forward to a happy last term.



We are holding an Easter Egg hunt on Friday to say well done to our pupils for all their work when the school was closed. The Easter eggs have been kindly sponsored by the Parents' Council.

## "Garden of Life" Project

After Easter, we will be officially launching our "Garden of Life" project. An amazing video of the garden design will be sent to all families and to the wider school community. We are hoping that everyone will get behind the project so that we can make this wonderful garden a reality.

The garden will be a bright and happy space for our pupils. A space that will be quieter than the rest of the playground, a space where pupils can sit down, talk, share and enjoy. If the last 12 challenging months have shown us anything, it is the importance of our outdoor spaces and especially our gardens. Our new school garden will be a wonderful creation and a positive addition to the lives of our pupils, at a time when it is most needed. Our pupils have shown great resilience this year and the building of this garden will be a celebration of this resilience and a positive legacy that will be enjoyed by many future generations of Callystown NS pupils.

We will be looking for help with fundraising, as well as people who may be able to lend a hand. In particular, we will be looking for tradespeople who can help with plastering and painting. The building of the garden is planned for the summer holidays but we will have our campaign up and running by the end of April.

"Níl neart go cur le chéile", working together we will make this happen.



## Parent Teacher Meetings

Parent / Teacher meetings will take place and return after the Easter break. The meetings will take place by telephone call. We will use the Aladdin App to organise the booking process. Through Aladdin, parents will be able to book a date and a time. Learning support teachers will also offer times for calls. It will be important that parents ensure that they are free at the particular time and that phonecalls last no more than 10 minutes. If additional discussion time is required this can be arranged at a future date.



## RSE Lessons

As part of the school's SPHE curriculum the Relationship and Sexuality Education programme will be taught to all classes in May. RSE is taught on alternate years to the Stay Safe programme. More information on the lessons taught to each class will be sent home at the end of April and parents who have any queries or questions are encouraged to contact the principal to discuss any issues. **Accord:** The delivery of the Accord programme for 6th class pupils is dependent on the easing of Covid 19 restrictions and the availability of Accord facilitators. It is still hoped that the programme will take place.

## 25 Additional Chromebooks

The school has bought an additional 25 chromebooks with a grant from the Dept of Education. We now have 60 of these devices. It is envisaged that these new devices will allow for the creation of IT stations in each room from 3rd to 6th class. The chromebooks will allow pupils to work independently using education software. We intend to use programmes to develop spelling, typing and maths skills as well as to use the chromebooks for research and word processing. The school is also purchasing sets of tablets for giving our younger pupils an opportunity to develop their IT skills.



**Child Protection Review** The school's Child Protection policy and statement is available on the school website. As part of the Board of management's annual review, parents are asked to read these documents and to contact the school principal if they wish to discuss any issue.

## Confirmation/ 1st Communion



The Armagh clergy today Archbishop Eamon Martin has announced that the sacraments of Confirmation and First Eucharist are postponed for the year 2020/21 as we still have no date for the return to normality.

The recommendation is that dates should not be considered before the beginning of June and, even then, things remain uncertain.

## New Beginnings



Congratulations to Ms Brodigan and Mr O'Donoghue on the birth of their baby daughter, and to Ms O'Donoghue on the birth of Fionn. Best wishes also to Ms Boylan who is expecting a baby in April.

A warm welcome to Ms Talt and to Ms Duffy who are replacing teachers who are on maternity leave. They have settled in very well and we hope their time in Callystown NS will be an enjoyable one.



## Book Rental

The book rental fee for the coming school year 2020/21 will remain at €70. This fee pays for textbooks, workbooks, copies, school journals, photocopying costs and arts and crafts materials. In light of continuing Covid 19 restrictions we are asking all payments to be made through the Aladdin e-payments system. A payment request notification will be sent to parents after the Easter break and payment should be made in full before June 4th.



**Homework:** We are continuing the review of our homework policy. After the break, pupils from 1st class and upwards will receive learning homework as well as a written/project assignment. The written assignment will be due for completion over the course of a week. Infants classes will continue with the current format.

School will close for the Easter Holidays at **12.30** on Friday March 26th and will reopen on Monday April 12th.

We hope you have an enjoyable break.



